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August 26, 2005

The Honorable Christopher S. "Kit" Bond  
United States Senate  
SR-274  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Bond:

I am writing to ask you to join me in opposing the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) recommendations that were recently approved. I am a supporter of the BRAC process and understand the need to consolidate military facilities to save taxpayer dollars. However, I believe that the Pentagon substantially deviated from the evaluation criteria for some of our state's facilities and the BRAC Commission has failed to recognize or remediate those errors. Consequently, I cannot support the current BRAC recommendations and I hope that you will join me in defending our state's facilities.

Specifically, I believe that the Pentagon inappropriately and unlawfully recommended the 131<sup>st</sup> Air National Guard Fighter Wing at Lambert for realignment. It has become clear since the list was published that the Air Force abused the BRAC process by discriminating against Air National Guard Units and by making programmatic aircraft location changes not within the scope of the BRAC law. The recommended closure of a majority of Air National Guard facilities throughout the country demonstrates the strained relationship between the Air Force and the Air Guard. The underlying disagreements need to be addressed before the Air Force is allowed to unilaterally, without consultation, close most Air Guard facilities. Additionally, neither I nor my Adjutant General was consulted before the 131<sup>st</sup> was included on the BRAC list which makes the realignment of the 131<sup>st</sup> illegal. Compelling arguments were made to the BRAC Commission at the June 20th regional hearing in St. Louis and they have been reiterated in letters and personal phone calls to commissioners - unfortunately the commission has ignored our concerns.

Next, the Pentagon inappropriately recommended the closure of the Army Human Resources Command (HRC) in Overland. This secure facility is uniquely situated to serve the needs of the Army in an efficient and effective way. In fact, the BRAC Commission was presented with a proposal that would have transferred ownership of the



HRC building to the Department of Defense (DoD), significantly reducing the cost of the expensive recommended move to Ft. Knox. This option would have given DoD title to valuable real estate which could have housed a consolidated HRC rather than spending millions of dollars to build facilities at Ft. Knox. Because the BRAC Commission adopted flawed HRC recommendations that unnecessarily cost taxpayers millions of dollars, I cannot support this proposal.

Finally, the Pentagon inappropriately recommended the closure of the Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS) in Kansas City and St. Louis. The consolidation of these facilities during a time of war when our men and women in uniform are most in need of accurate and timely pay is irresponsible and illogical. The DFAS facility in Kansas City is one of the most accurate and efficient DFAS facilities in the country. It is the exclusive processor of payments to our Marines stationed throughout the world. The St. Louis facility also has an excellent performance record. These vital facilities are performing exceptionally, their closure does not produce significant cost savings, and the risk to our soldiers substantially outweighs any marginal perceived benefits from this change. Consequently, the current BRAC list should be opposed because it contains flawed DFAS consolidation.

I know that opposing BRAC recommendations is a serious matter that requires careful thought and study. I would not write you and urge this action if I did not believe that Missouri facilities had been incorrectly or illegally evaluated and recommended for closure or realignment. You and I have worked tirelessly to educate the commission and reiterate these points, but to no avail.

I am continuing to commit the resources of Missouri state government to fight for these crucial installations. I have asked Attorney General Jay Nixon to file a lawsuit against the Secretary of Defense and BRAC Commission for illegally recommending and adopting the realignment of the 131<sup>st</sup> fighter wing without consulting me and because that decision was clearly the result of animosity between the Air Force and Air Guard and not the result of careful planning and consideration of Homeland Defense. Please join me in opposing these recommendations and vote against this round of BRAC realignments and closures.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if I can be of any assistance. Thank you again for your support for Missouri's incredible military facilities and men and women in uniform.

Sincerely,

Matt Blunt